



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

For Immediate Release:

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Ellicott City Woman Sentenced in 2016 Drug-Related Auto Manslaughter

An Ellicott City motorist who struck and killed a pedestrian in 2016 was sentenced to five years in prison yesterday. Last July, Brittany McElhiney, 29, of the 10000 block of Hobsons Choice Lane, Ellicott City pleaded guilty to auto manslaughter in the death of 78-year-old Robert Dukehart and in a separate case arising from the collision, McElhiney also pleaded guilty to one count of possession with intent to distribute marijuana.

On September 24, 2016 at approximately 10:32 a.m., witnesses observed McElhiney driving on the wrong side of Green Clover Drive where she collided with another vehicle. Her 2013 Ford Focus, continued to the side of the roadway where it struck Dukehart. McElhiney was uninjured but Dukehart was transported by ambulance to the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center where he succumbed to extensive injuries on October 19, 2016.

Police investigators determined that McElhiney was under the influence of drugs, primarily alprazolam (Xanax) when the accident occurred. Two bags of marijuana also were discovered in her vehicle. An extraction from the Ford Focus event data recorder revealed that McElhiney's vehicle was traveling in excess of 55 mph just prior to the accident; the speed limit on the residential street is 25 mph.

A subsequent search warrant executed at McElhiney's home on October 6, 2016 led to the recovery of a substantial amount of additional drugs, cash and paraphernalia, and resulted in drug manufacturing and distribution charges against McElhiney and her boyfriend, Richard E. Debois, 65, also of the 10000 block of Hobsons Choice Lane. Debois pleaded guilty to two counts of drug possession with intent to distribute last August and will be sentenced on March 15, 2018.

Howard County Circuit Court Judge Timothy J. McCrone sentenced McElhiney to a 10-year prison term, suspending all but five years on the auto manslaughter conviction. He sentenced her to a fully-suspended five-year consecutive sentence on the drug charge and placed her on five years of supervised probation upon her release.

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